

SECCS Eighth Edition

The State Early Childhood Comprehensive Steering Committee has been continuing to work on the Strategic Plan for California. Many thanks to the Steering Committee Members who continue to donate their time and efforts to this process. The most recent document completed is the Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles

1. There is a desire to improve the service delivery system, and a willingness to collaborate to accomplish this goal.
2. All families can benefit from education and support within the context of their own communities.
3. All parents are in the process of developing their skills and abilities as parents.
4. A multifaceted approach to service delivery must be family centered, innovative, empowering and inclusive.
5. Every child deserves to have quality early childhood experiences; without them, we are contributing to the achievement gap in school.
6. Accessible and appropriate health care is a crucial component of an Early Childhood Care (ECC) system that is holistic, and includes components that promote good health, safe and strong families and communities, and quality early learning experiences.
7. An ECC system should include partnerships with other organizations whose missions include poverty reduction and economic development as core components.
8. A successful ECC system requires a public-private partnership – we all have a stake in the healthy development of our children.
9. Families are integral to the planning and implementation process.

The Steering Committee meets again on May 23, 2005 to finalize the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan. The plan will then be shared with individuals and groups throughout California over the next six months.

THIS MONTH, THERE ARE SEVERAL EXCITING PROJECTS TO HIGHLIGHT, IN THE FIELD OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION. TWO UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS WERE LAUNCHED IN LOS ANGELES AND SAN MATEO AND RAND RELEASED A NEW STUDY REGARDING THE LONG TERM IMPACT OF PRESCHOOL.

Los Angeles Universal Preschool Program was launched in March 2005 and represents the start of a countywide system that over the next decade will enroll 100,000 pre-kindergarten children — or 70% of the 4-year-old population — regardless of family income. The program promises to relieve waiting lists at crowded preschools, open new facilities in underserved areas, provide a five-star rating system to help determine the quality of schools and introduce a new fee structure.

During the first year of the preschool system, from \$20 million to \$30 million in funding will be distributed for:

- One hundred approved centers — 20 in each county supervisorial district.
- One hundred home-based family child-care providers, which will be evaluated and funded based on the same five-star rating system as centers.
- Sixteen sites where new preschool slots will be created in the most severely underserved areas of the county.
- Five centers that will provide access to children with special physical or mental needs. These centers will also be assigned star ratings but will receive more funding based on the higher costs of providing services.

San Mateo County Preschool for All: First 5 San Mateo County in collaboration with First 5 California, the County of San Mateo and the Dave and Lucile Packard Foundation, will invest more than \$10 million over the first three years (2004-2007) to launch Preschool for All. The boundary areas of the Ravenswood and Redwood City School Districts will be the first locations to receive new slots. These sites have the highest percentage of English Learners, low income children, and more than 10% of the county's preschool age children reside there.

Rand Study: Creating Universal Preschool in California would create benefits that surpass costs.

Investing public money to make preschool available to every 4 year old in California would generate an estimated \$2 to \$4 in benefits for every dollar spent, according to the study. The study estimates that the cost of a high quality universal preschool program would be more than offset by benefits such as a drop in the amount of special education, less grade repetition among K - 12 students, less youth and adult crime, and a more productive state workforce.

If you are **not** interested in receiving future updates from the SECCS project, please email me back and I will remove your name. On the other hand, if you are interested in adding additional folks you think would benefit from the updates, please let me know and I will add their names. Your comments and suggestions are appreciated. Please feel free to correspond with me by email wewayne@kern.org or telephone 916 552-8742 or 661 204-8840.

Visit the SECCS website at: <http://www.mch.dhs.ca.gov/programs/seccsfacts.htm>